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GENERAL

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1. French views on Indochinese problems--US Ambassador Bruce in Paris has been informed by the Secretary-General of the French Foreign Office, Parodi, that Foreign Minister Schuman favors transferring responsibility for the conduct of Indochinese affairs from the Ministry of Overseas France "at the earliest possible date" and that Schuman hopes to reach an agreement on the issue with his Cabinet colleagues soon. Parodi also informed Bruce that consideration will be given immediately to the advisability of an early French statement on the concessions to Indochinese nationalism embodied in the 8 March agreements, with the aim of conciliating public opinion in the US and in the interested Asian states. Parodi added, however, that the French would not be willing to make at this time an "evolutionary statement" giving a timetable for Indochinese independence, primarily because of the "inability" of the Vietnamese "to carry out satisfactorily the responsibilities with which they have already been charged."

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